



North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation Tackling the Meth Lab Epidemic

NC must continue to invest in the SBI to target the growing meth lab epidemic while also providing law enforcement and prosecutors with speedy analysis for meth and other drug cases.

The SBI is the only law enforcement agency in North Carolina trained to process meth labs. On average, SBI Chemists spend **40 hours on each meth lab**, compared to less than one hour processing a cocaine sample that has been submitted for testing. There were more than 344 meth lab busts in North Carolina, a 46% increase in 2011 alone.

The SBI anticipates that it will **respond to as many as 700 meth labs this year alone.**

The growing meth problem is hurting our children. North Carolina law enforcement officers are finding children living in more than 20 percent of homes where meth is made. **In the last two years alone, 142 children were removed from meth labs in the state.** Recently, an 11 month old child with chemical burns was pulled out of home with a meth lab. Children in these homes are exposed to toxic chemicals and threatened by fire and explosions, and they're often neglected or abused.

The SBI needs more agents for its Methamphetamine Response Team in order to more effectively combat the proliferation of illegal meth labs in North Carolina. These teams will include drug agents and drug chemists to process the labs safely and gather evidence for prosecution. Additional agents and drug chemists are required to respond to, render safe, and combat the dramatic growth in meth labs and meth trafficking in NC. It is recommended that the SBI add a 9.0 member unit to combat meth manufacturing and the increase in meth drug trafficking activity. This unit includes 6.0 agents, 2.0 forensic drug chemists and 1.0 administrative assistant. **Requested Appropriation \$595,834 (Recurring)**